

History of International Military Student Programs at USASMA

The International Military Student Program

and

Exchange Instructor Program

Students in Class #6 of the Sergeants Major Course began their studies in August, 1975. Robert J. May of Australia was the very first and only international military student in attendance at USASMA and paved the way for future international students after his graduation in January, 1976.

In May of 1984, at the direction of the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations asked the commander of the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) to study ways “to expand Army programs for interaction between U.S. Army and foreign Army military and civilian personnel.” Based on comments from TRADOC, ODCSOPS forwarded to the Army Chief of Staff in October of 1985, an Issue Paper recommending the “Opening the Sergeants Major Course to Foreign Students.” The proposal was ultimately approved by the CSA.

October 1985: West Germany, Britain, and Canada were offered the opportunity to station an NCO at USASMA as a Sergeants Major Course (SMC) Instructor. The initiative by the Army Chief of Staff was a means of enhancing the Academy’s growth and bolstering credence to USASMA’s International Military Student Program initiatives. The countries that initially participated were selected because their NCOs had much in common with U.S. NCOs. Britain was the first to formally accept, and then the Canadian Army also agreed to the idea. West Germany initially declined, but later requested the opportunity to provide an instructor in the future.

Also in October of that same year, HQDA directed TRADOC to conduct a worldwide survey to determine foreign interest in attending the SMC. TRADOC was also directed to open the course to foreign students no later than Fiscal Year ‘87 if sufficient interest was found.

As a means of enhancing the image of SMC in the eyes of foreign countries, course attendance was initially only by CSA invitation. This allowed for the same course structure as the Command and General Staff College and Army War College.

In November 1985, a survey initiated by Security Assistance Field Agency (SATFA) was sent out to nations worldwide, with a response deadline of January 1986. The survey canvassed 118 countries and resulted in a total of 74 responses. Only 30 countries declared any interest in sending their service members to USASMA's SMC.

A pilot course instituted in April 1986, consisting of four to six NCOs was proposed, and it was recommended the pilot course kick-off with SMC Class #31 (Jan 88) to coincide with the opening of USASMA's new facility. Five International Military Students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

Additional Timeline

July 1986: Great Britain's Regimental Sergeant Major, Geoffrey Guest, attended Class #28. Upon graduation in January 1987, he assumed instructor duties as the first sergeant major in our Exchange Instructor Program.

January 1988: Students from seven countries arrived and participated in USASMA's International Military Student Program Pilot Course. Country participation included West Germany, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Canada, United Kingdom, and Kenya. The Chief of Staff of the Army asked for a pilot course critique after graduation. Geoffrey Guest of the United Kingdom was selected as SMA Exchange Instructor. Seven international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

July 1988: Class #32: Included two Exchange Instructors. Regimental Sergeant Major Philip J. Everett of Britain replaced RSM Guest, and Canada provided her first Exchange Instructor, Chief Warrant Officer Lucien J. Durelle. Two international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

July through August 1988: CSA sends invitations to various ambassadors for attendance to Class #33 January to July 1989.

January 1989: Class #33 includes students from Botswana, Italy, Kenya, Malaysia, Philippines, and Spain. The class graduates in July '89. Philippines initiated its program at USASMA with gusto when the country's military leaders send Command Sergeant Major of the Army, Joel T. Trompeta, as their first student. Seven international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

July 1989: Class #34. Students were from Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Somalia, Rwanda, and Zimbabwe. Class #34 graduated in January of 1990. Sergeant Major Richard Ee of Singapore was later appointed as the Sergeant Major of the Singapore Armed Forces. Six international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

January 1990: Class #35. CWO Durelle of Canada and RSM Everett of the United Kingdom were selected as International Exchange Instructors to attend class. Other countries participating were Italy, Kenya, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Spain, and Switzerland. Sergeant Major Gottfreid Wiedmer of Switzerland went on to become the Sergeant Major of Swiss Army. Unique to Class #35 is the attendance by the first Swiss NCO to attend schooling at any U.S. Army school or academy. Class #35 graduated seven international military students and two international exchange instructors in July 1990.

July 1990. Class #36. Students attended from the Philippines, Korea, Italy, Somalia, Singapore, and the United Kingdom. This class graduated in January of 1991. SGM Nawrat of Germany, CWO Durelle of Canada, and RSM Everitt of the United Kingdom, taught as International Exchange Instructors for this class. Six international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

January 1991: Class #37 consisted of representation from Italy, Spain, Botswana, Philippines, Singapore, Jordan, and the Netherlands. Sergeant Major Willem M. Tanis went on to be the Sergeant Major of the Army in the Netherlands. Class #37 graduated in July 1991. SGM Nawrat of Germany, CWO Durelle of Canada and RSM Smith of the United Kingdom served as International Exchange Instructors. Seven international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

July 1991: Four students attended Class #38. Sergeants major from Turkey, Italy, Singapore and the Philippines graduated in January of 1993. SGM Nawrate of Germany, CWO Durelle of Canada and RSM Smith of the United Kingdom all served as international exchange instructors. Four international military students attended the Academy.

January 1992: Class #39. SGM Smith of the United Kingdom served as an international exchange instructor. No international student data is available for Class 39.

July 1992: Class #40 consisted of representation from Canada, United Kingdom, Philippines, Spain, Swaziland, Korea, Belize, Botswana, Singapore, and the Netherlands. Class #40 graduated in January of 1993. RSM Smith of the United Kingdom served as an international exchange instructor, and 10 international military students attended the Academy.

February 1993: Class #41 arrived with students from the Philippines, Netherlands, Italy, Singapore, Columbia, and Guyana. Class #41 graduated in July of 1993. CWO Ferretti of Canada and RSM Hill of the United Kingdom served as international exchange instructors. Six international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

July of 1993: Class #42. Participating countries were Singapore, Brazil, Spain, Switzerland, Poland, Botswana, Germany, France, Australia, and the Philippines. The class graduated in January 1994. CWO Ferretti of Canada and RSM Hill of the United Kingdom served as international exchange instructors. Ten international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

January 1994: Class #43 arrived at Fort Bliss with students from Lebanon, Italy, Switzerland, Philippines, Botswana, Singapore, and the Netherlands. Class#43 graduated in July of 1994. CWO Ferretti of Canada, RSM Hill of the United Kingdom, RSM Pressley of Australia, and SGM Pauli of Germany served as international exchange instructors. Seven international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

July 1994: Class #44 graduated one student from the United Kingdom in January 1995. CWO Ferretti of Canada, RSM Hill of the United Kingdom, RSM Pressley of Australia, and SGM Pauli of Germany served as international exchange instructors.

January 1995: Class #45 consisted of students representing Australia, (2) Japan, Singapore, Italy, Botswana, Lebanon, and the Philippines. All graduated June 1995. RSM Pressley of Australia served as an international exchange instructor and eight international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

August 1995: Class #46 Sergeants Major from Botswana, Australia, (2) Japan, Singapore, Switzerland, Namibia, Brazil, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Canada and Lebanon arrived and graduated in May of 1996. RSM Cattemole of the United Kingdom, and SGM Pauli of Germany served as international exchange instructors. 12 international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

August 1996: Class #47, consisting of students from the Philippines, Australia, Belize, Botswana, Poland, Thailand, Korea, Switzerland, Argentina, Italy, Japan, Korea, Namibia, Singapore, Germany, Japan, Netherlands and Brazil. Class #47 graduated in May of 1997. Sergeant Major Marion A Bowen of Australia was the first female International Military Sergeant Major to attend the academy. RSM Rodgers of the United Kingdom, RSM Wonderham of Canada, and RSM Hansford of Australia served as International Exchange Instructors. Sergeant Major Tom Isaacs became the Sergeant Major of the Botswana Defense Force, and 18 international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

August 1997: Class #48 included student representatives from the Philippines, Poland, Italy, United Kingdom, Lebanon, Guyana, Namibia, (2) Japan, (2) Korea, Netherlands, Botswana, Singapore, South Africa, Austria, Brazil, Australia, Switzerland, Croatia and Argentina. SGM Schulze of Germany, WO1 Bowen of Australia, RSM Rodgers of the United Kingdom and CWO Wonderham of Canada served as international exchange instructors. Sergeant Major Predrag Toplak of Croatia went on to be appointed as the Sergeant Major of the Croatian Army. 21 international military students attended the Academy.

August 1998: Class #49 had students from Lebanon, Philippines, New Zealand, Italy, Swaziland, Australia, (2) Japan, St Christop[her (Kitts/Nevis), Singapore, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Switzerland, Zimbabwe, Netherlands, Korea, Argentina, Trinidad, and Croatia who graduated in May of 1999. RSM Creggan of the United Kingdom, SGM Schulze of Germany, and RSM Speter of Australia served as international exchange instructors. 20 international military students attended the Academy.

Class #50 began in August of 1999. Argentina, Philippines, Brazil, (2) Singapore, Croatia, Switzerland, (2) Netherlands, Thailand, Australia, Korea, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Italy, (2) Japan, Taiwan, Bosnia, New Zealand, Guyana, graduated May 2000. RSM Fischer of the Netherlands served as International Exchange Instructors. 22 international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

Class #51 began in August of 2000. Brazil, Philippines, Netherlands, Canada, Ghana, Poland, Germany, New Zealand, Korea, Japan, Singapore, Bosnia, Antigua, Italy, Australia, Austria, Zimbabwe, Croatia, and Zambia were the countries represented. Class #51 graduated in May 2001. 24 international military students attended the Sergeants Major Academy.

Class #52 began in August of 2001. Lithuania, Brazil, Romania, New Zealand, Bosnia, Barbados, Australia, Switzerland, Netherlands, Namibia, South Africa, Poland, Korea, Italy, Philippines, Japan, Botswana, Singapore, Argentina, Croatia, Austria, Guyana, and Taiwan attended the Sergeants Major Academy. Class #52 graduated in May 2002. Franciscus L.J. Frederix, Netherlands, Ward D. Brown, Canada, Reimond A. Heep, Germany served as International Exchange Instructors. 28 international military students were in Class #52.

Class #53 began in August of 2002. Australia, Philippines, Argentina, Colombia, Macedonia, Botswana, Croatia, Hungary, Canada, Singapore, Slovakia, Switzerland, Italy, Croatia, Romania, Guyana, Japan, Korea, Namibia, Netherlands, Philippines, Poland, Slovakia, South Africa, Taiwan, Trinidad, and Zambia graduated in May 2003. Unique to Class #53 is the attendance by the first NCOs from Hungary, Macedonia, and Slovakia. Wayne J. Giddings, Australia, EEF L. M. Hendrikx, Netherlands, Ward D. Brown, Canada, Reimond A. Heep, Germany, served as international exchange instructors. Class #53 consisted of 33 international military students.

Class #54 began in August of 2003. Japan, Poland, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, Italy, Bosnia, Ghana, Jamaica, Macedonia, South Africa, Australia, Netherlands, Czech Republic, Hungary, Croatia, Lithuania, Philippines, Romania, Botswana, Albania, Argentina, Brazil, Slovenia, Korea, Switzerland, Guyana, and Niger graduated May 2004. Robert G. Aboud, Australia, James D. Butters, Canada, and Jan Van Triest, Netherlands served as international exchange instructors. Class #54 consisted of 42 international military students.

Class #55 began in August of 2004. Korea, Lithuania, Romania, Italy, Singapore, Philippines, Switzerland, Australia, Japan, Hungary, Canada, Slovenia, Germany, Netherlands, Philippines, Jamaica, Romania, Macedonia, Singapore, Czech Republic, Poland, Colombia, Zambia, Bosnia, New Zealand, Slovakia, Taiwan, Yemen, and Botswana graduated in May 2005. Mark Kjellgren, Australia, and Renee Van Boxtel, Netherlands served as international exchange instructors. Class #55 consisted of thirty-five international military students.

Class #56 began in August 2005. Yemen, Japan, Botswana, Romania, Macedonia, Canada, Netherlands, Guyana, Slovenia, Italy, Singapore, Romania, Poland, Switzerland, Uganda, Hungary, Czech Republic, Malaysia, Trinidad, Australia, Slovakia, Korea, Lithuania, Netherlands, Bosnia, Singapore, Belize, Jamaica, Taiwan, and Afghanistan will graduate May 2006. Class #56 had first Afghanistan student to attend the Sergeants Major Academy. Renee Van Boxtel, Netherlands, Craig Egan, Australia, Kenneth Hodge, Canada, Manfred S. Jerabek, Germany, and Paul Kerkhofs, Netherlands, are currently serving as international exchange instructors. Class #56 consists of 46 international military students.

Class #57 began in August 2006 with 44 international students from Yemen, Belize, Netherlands, Jamaica, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Lithuania, Canada, Taiwan, Philippines, New Zealand, Macedonia, Switzerland, Germany, Japan, Chile, Australia, Latvia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Germany, Brazil, Trinidad-Tobago, Romania, Botswana, Ghana, Macedonia, Estonia, Poland, Hungary, Singapore, Jordan, and Bosnia. Singapore was selected to participate in the Academy's Military Exchange Personnel Program and was assigned as an instructor in the Leadership Division of the Sergeant Major Course. Other exchange instructors included Manfred Jerabek of Germany, Ashley Haywood of Australia, Derrik Bisson of Canada, and Bos, Anroldus of the Netherlands.

Class #58 began in August of 2007 with 49 International Military Students, the largest international class to date. They represented Afghanistan, Switzerland, Slovakia, Philippines, Singapore, Macedonia, Australia, Trinidad-Tobago, Belize, Hungary, Bosnia, Mongolia, Poland, Hungary, Germany, South Africa, Brazil, Canada, Romania, Uganda, Albania, Chile, Slovenia, Estonia, Czech Republic, Netherlands, Croatia, Papua New Guinea, Bolivia, Jordan, Botswana, Lithuania, New Zealand, and Japan.

Class #59 of the SMC included 47 students from 33 countries attending the Sergeants Major Academy. The class began August 2008 with students from Afghanistan, Australia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Columbia, Czech Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Lithuania, Macedonia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa and Uganda attended. Our exchange instructors included, Nam Toh Kwee of Singapore, Kim Felmingham of Australia, Uwe Lieske of Germany, Daniel Moyer of Canada, and Patrick Slagers of the Netherlands. The International Student Hall of Fame was established with the induction of Sergeant Major of the Armed Forces Boban Stojanovik, Regimental Sergeant Major of the Australian Army, Stephen Ward, and Forces Sergeant Major of the Botswana Land Forces, Herman Bahuma.

Class 60 of the SMC started in August of 2009 with 42 students from 36 countries. Countries represented were Afghanistan, Albania, Australia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Columbia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Mongolia, Montenegro, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Republic of Macedonia, Rwanda, Serbia, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, Switzerland, Taiwan, and Turkey. This was the first time Specialized English Training was mandatory for all international students due to a new course curriculum.

Class #61 of the SMC started in August of 2010 with 46 students from 38 countries. Countries represented were Afghanistan, Australia, Botswana, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Columbia, Estonia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Ghana, Germany, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Slovak Republic, Mongolia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Netherlands, Suriname, New Zealand, Philippines, Poland, Papua New Guinea, Serbia, Rwanda, Slovenia, Singapore, Switzerland, Turkey, Taiwan, Uganda, and Namibia. This was the first year Suriname sent student to the Sergeant Major Course, and there were two sergeants major of the Army selects among the IMS body; SMA Raphael Oa of Papua New Guinea and SMA Kirilov Lambov of Bulgaria. Five international SMA equivalents were inducted into the International Student Hall of Fame, CSM Predrag Toplak of Croatia SMA Dickson Owusu of Ghana, SMA Andre Odenkirchen of the Netherlands, LFSM UPDF WO1 Patrick Ekirita of Uganda, and PAP CSM Augustin Nicolau of Romania. There were five MPEP instructors, CSM Uwe Lieske of Germany, MWO Govindasamy Parthiban of Singapore, WO1 Jason Burford of Australia, Adjutant Rico Mesman of the Netherlands, and CWO Jaques Roy of Canada.

Class #62 of the Sergeants Major Course started in August of 2011 with 38 International Students from 30 countries. Countries that participated in Class 62 included; Afghanistan, Australia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Columbia, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malawi, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey , Trinidad-Tobago and The Cultural Institute of Taipei. Our MPEP Instructors for Class 62 are Adjutant Johannes Haans of the Netherlands, CSM Juergen Stark of Germany, WO1 John Kirkham of Australia, SGM Sergeant Major Joao Marcelo De Camargo Mota of Brazil, CWO Garth Hoegi of Canada, and MWO Mok Chai Kee of Singapore. On 21 June 2012 there were three International Graduates who were inducted into the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy's International Student Hall of Fame; Sergeant Major of the New Zealand Army, Warrant Officer Class One Daniel Lawrence Broughton; Sergeant Major of the Singapore Army, Senior Warrant Officer Tang Peck Oon; and Force Sergeant Major Victor Martin of Trinidad-Tobago.